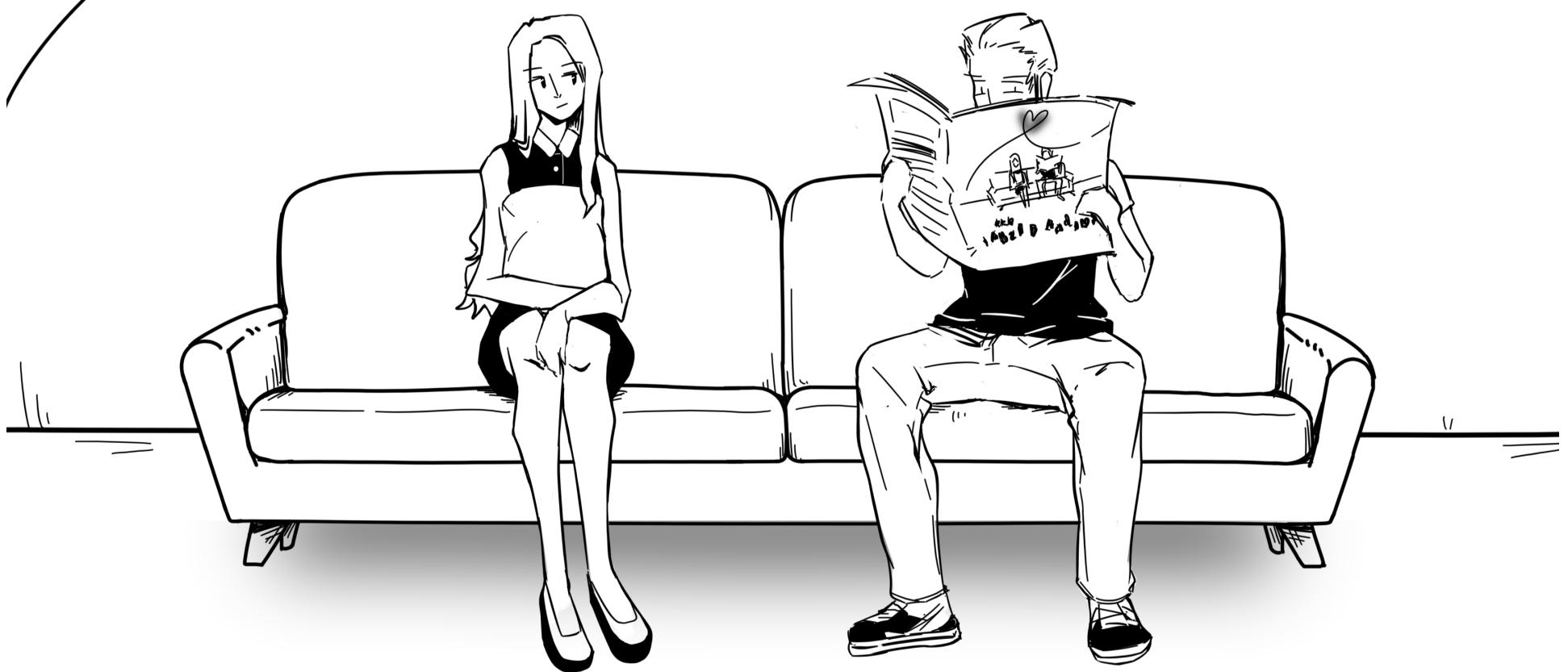


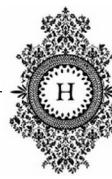
babe?

yes babe?

im leaving you.  
for the herald.



the  
Innis HeRALd  
feb 14 V59E3



V59 2023-24  
**The Innis Herald**  
**Masthead**

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# Letter From the Editor

**Sam Guevara**  
**EDITORIAL**

**dear readers,**

come here often?

happy new year and happier newest Herald. to returning and newcomer Herald apologists and appreciators alike, welcome back to The Innis Herald. it is a pleasure for you and I to enter 2024 and it is my pleasure to present v59e3. as you may or may not know, or as you may or may not look at titles, I am the Editor-in-Chief. that said, it is my unbiased belief that we are so back and we are so better.

to start off this special edition, on this pseudospecial day, let us begin with a love letter:

*O Gracious Editor,*

*I thought about writing to You while at work, catching up on the two most recent issues of the Herald. I nearly pissed myself laughing in the middle of a staff meeting about- actually, I don't know what it was about. They were speaking Japanese. (Did I mention I'm teaching English in Japan? I'll try not to mention it six more times.)*

*Anyways, I have a question for You, O Great And Powerful Editor. When I'm not reading the Herald in my free time, I'm working on the long-form version of a short story I submitted to Y'all last year. Please tell me: how can I be as witty and well-spoken (well-written?) as You? I can't possibly reach Your level, O Beautiful Stunning And Eclectically Talented Editor: I can only hope to fall into the perview of Your favourable gaze.*

*With love,*

*The Innis Graduate Currently Employed As The Token White Person*

*P.S. The lack of indoor heating has compelled me to wear my Innis Merch scarf nearly 24/7. You're welcome for the free international advertising.*

*The one and only Rosa,*

*Feel free to write to me from anywhere, be it at your workplace in Japan or in your reminiscent dreams about Innis. The two most recent issues of the Herald have missed you and your work, almost as much as I have.*

*My admirer, fear not for heights to meet my radiance of eloquence are not easily reached by mere mortals. That is of course, unless they are a Herald contributor. For anyone who dares to read and write for the Herald is able to forth and conquer the realms of rhetoric. All in all, one must embark on the daring quest of linguistic talent at tremendous levels through treacherous depths of consuming the Herald, and thou then shalt fulfil the prophecy through the wield of powers creating for the Herald. That is what the Herald does to a mf.*

*Best of luck on your story and — debatably more challenging — your experience as the token white person.*

*Yours truly,*

*a Gracious, Great, Powerful, Witty, Well-spoken/written, Beautiful, Stunning, Talented, and above all Humble Editor*

*P.S. I will pass along a message to the ICSS Clubs & Merch Director, and let him know his business is saving lives by helping people avoid freezing in style on a global scale (undramatic, unexaggerated news is clearly my calling)*

as this first page comes to its end, let us welcome the rest of the pages which are pure art — once again, my unbiased belief. as always, hot people read the Herald, hotter people contribute to the Herald, and the hottest people run the Herald.

xoxo!

**sincerely, sam**

WE WISH TO ACKNOWLEDGE THIS LAND ON WHICH THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO OPERATES. FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS IT HAS BEEN THE TRADITIONAL LAND OF THE HURON-WENDAT, THE SENECA, AND THE MISSISSAUGAS OF THE CREDIT. TODAY, THIS MEETING PLACE IS STILL THE HOME TO MANY INDIGENOUS PEOPLE FROM ACROSS TURTLE ISLAND AND WE ARE GRATEFUL TO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK ON THIS LAND.



# The Innis Mosaic

In the 70s, the Mosaic was a way for the Herald community to share their thoughts or stories across the college and campus from confessions to updates, if not bar recommendations.

As of 2024, here is what we have to say:

- The College's newest make-out spot: the bike cage in the underground parking garage beneath Residence. Tried and tested: 7/10. An excellent place to secure a kiss. Alternatively, an excellent place to secure a bike if you are a cyclist (you do not kiss)
- My sleep schedule is so bad, I'm living in another timezone.
- Conversation between Cindy and her friend after one of the most difficult tests in her 3 years of uni: "So how was the test?" "It was really fun... if you're a masochist"
- Sidney Smith Hall catching fire on the second day of classes was not on my 2024 bingo card, but here we are
- Moment of silence for remembering the recent OG Anunoby and Pascal Siakam trades. Shoutout to Chris Boucher for being the last 2019 NBA Champion on the Raptors today
- I attended all my classes thus far and I genuinely cannot be prouder - Lina, 3 days into winter semester
- Overheard and agreed with: "No, sorry, I only steal ethically. You know, from frats."
- A.G. seeks mystery man last seen playing with a blue lightsaber in Innis Residence courtyard at midnight. Mystery man was very focused. Sound effects and all. Numerous others agree that mystery man is the coolest
- Yash thinks you should come to the Herald Speakeasy this leap day on February 29th
- Sam will be at the Herald Speakeasy from 7pm to 9pm
- You are invited to the Herald Speakeasy at Innis College for mocktails and vibes
- If you don't have a date this Valentine's Day, know that the Herald is always here for you <3

YOU'RE NOT UNINVITED TO:

the Herald  
Speakeasy

Feb 29th, 2024 7-9pm  
Location: Innis College

RSVP NOW: 

In collaboration with the English Students' Union, for one night only, we are converting Innis College into a jazzy bar with open mic performances, a live bar with signature mocktails, and the best people on campus

Passcode at the door: I'm a Herald Hoe





# THE PIGEON. Chronicles -vol. 6-

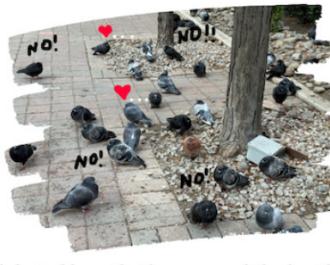
A  
TALE  
OF TWO  
PIGEONS



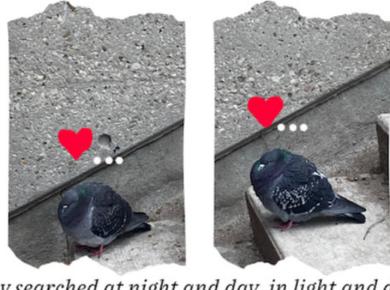
*Two pigeons, both alike in fluffiness  
From rival families on Toronto's streets...*



*Were one day overcome with weariness  
For they had felt that they were not complete.*



*With bated breath, they crossed the bustling park  
Enduring shame and scorn from birds around...*



*They searched at night and day, in light and dark  
Until they heard the ring of love's sweet sound.*



*"Hey handsome! What think you of this sad life?  
I see no reason why we hurl attacks."  
"Then let us disappear from all this strife!  
Let's run away and ne'er shall we look back."*



*"Though talons, beaks and wings may well divide,  
In love's embrace, most surely we'll survive."*

**the end.**

## Liquid Love™

### Yash Kumar Singhal FOOD



I have spent the last three years at UofT studying the intricacies of human biology, reading countless research papers about aphrodisiacs over numberless nights, studying the arts of attraction from various cultures, and roaming the 14th floor of Robarts scouring every single book about magic I could find. The culmination of all my years of research, my magnificent magnum opus, is this recipe. An Aperitif of Affection, a Brew of Beauty, a Concoction for Compatibility, a Drink of Desire, an Elixir of Endearment... my patent-pending "Liquid Love™".

This totally real, completely safe\*, and definitely effective\*\* potion of passion is guaranteed to turn your hopeless romantic daydreams to reality, but only if you follow each step with utmost precision.

1. Find a quiet space, where you won't be disturbed by probing passersby and procure a glass.
2. Grate a piece of dark chocolate onto a pan and allow it to melt on very low heat. Dip the rim of your glass into the chocolate, and don't worry about it dripping down the sides. Love, after all, is often a little bit messy.
3. While the chocolate is still melted, sprinkle some finely crushed sea-salt along the rim. The goddess of beauty, Aphrodite, was born from the ocean. With this small gesture, you've brought her essence to your lips.
4. Add to it some vanilla extract made from real beans (none of that artificial stuff). With its sweet fragrance and powerful flavour, vanilla is a strong aphrodisiac that has been harnessed by many mystics and ancients over the eons.
5. Then goes in a smidgen of spice: cayenne, red chilly powder, a dash of chilli sauce; whatever you have on hand. A bit of heat will be the spark you need to light the roaring fire of love in your life.
6. Now for some expensive, fair trade, good quality cacao bought from a store far from your home. Another aromatic aphrodisiac that has been used for its magical properties for hundreds of years. It must remind you of the time and effort love takes, and show you how worth it that journey is.
7. Pick raspberry, strawberry, pomegranate, or cherry. Then add to your concoction the juice, jam, or essence of this fruit. It'll impart its red colour, vibrant and bold, along with a touch of sweetness. You can also crush fresh fruit with some sugar to make your own concentrate.
8. Flowers are a universal symbol of romance, vessels of natural beauty filled with scent and colour. Brew tea of hibiscus, jasmine, or any other edible flower and fill your cup all the way to the brim. You may also sprinkle rose water or add a single thread of saffron.
9. Now whisper to the drink your intentions and wants. What do you hope for? What do you like about your crush? Tell it your secrets, say them aloud, for something that's hidden now has to come out.
10. Remember, your drink might look very different from mine because love takes on unique forms for each one of us. Some cinnamon, gold leaf, wood smoke, or honey would be nice garnishes. Perhaps even a spray of your perfume, a ribbon tied in a bow, or some warm yellow sunlight that will sparkle off your muse's eyes. Additionally, the tears of a unicorn or the dust from a shooting star if you can get your hands on some.

And now your drink is ready, this passionate potion. Be sure to make two glasses, it's best with conversation. Make it warm in winter, and iced when it is hot; I'm sure my trademarked Liquid Love will help you out a lot!

*\*Effects may differ from person to person. Neither Yash nor the Innis Herald are responsible for any unintended side effects such as crazed fits of desire, broken hearts, or failed relationships. User discretion is advised.*

*\*\*Experimental trials are still running and I need a volunteer! If you're looking for love and would like to help me out with this incredibly important research, dm me @the\_yks\_ on instagram or come by my lab at Innis College room 107.*



# Five Best Toronto Coffee Shops for a Valentine's Day Date

## Selena Mercuri STUDENT LIFE

Coffee shops make for amazing date spots, Valentine's Day or otherwise. They've got plenty of seating, snacks, and specialty drinks. Some even serve alcohol. Here are five coffee shop recommendations from someone who has worked in Toronto's specialty coffee scene for over ten years.

### Dark Horse Espresso @ 401 Richmond St. W.

This coffee shop has something for everyone: craft beer, specialty coffee, a large ever-changing selection of wines, and plenty of seating. Dark Horse features a quaint marketplace that is bound to grab your attention. Their coffee is roasted by Detour, and they have delicious pastries and sandwiches made by Dear Grain Bakery. The Bailey's americano is top-notch. They are located inside the 401 Richmond creative hub, so be sure to set aside some time to browse the artwork.

### Balzac's @ 1 Trinity St.

Located in the heart of the Distillery District, Bal-

zac's is the perfect place to spend time with your special someone. They have ample seating across two floors, and a grand chandelier to compliment their Parisian style decor. Balzac's also roasts their own coffee. If you're more of a tea drinker, give their Parisian Mist a try; it's earl grey tea sweetened with vanilla and topped off with a layer of steamed milk. End your visit with a romantic stroll through the district!

### Boxcar Social @ 1210 Yonge St.

A massive trendy seating area makes Boxcar Social an especially great date spot. This location formerly operated as a dry cleaners. Their signature cookie butter lattes, inspired by Lotus Biscuits, have garnered them many five star reviews. Their coffee is roasted by Subtext Coffee Roasters. Boxcar Social is open until 11:00 pm most days of the week which sets them apart from other coffee shops that close in the afternoon. They also have a good selection of cocktails, wine, and beer. For those returning in the summertime, they have a large back patio.

### Dineen @ 140 Yonge St.

Grab a spot along the window so you and your date can people-watch while you sip on coffee at Dineen. The seating area can get a bit crowded, but the stunning interior more than makes up for it. Dineen sources their pastries from Circles and Squares Bakery—be sure to try the cranberry lemon scone, the iced cinnamon danish, or the almond croissant. Their banana walnut muffin is one of various vegan options they provide.

### Pilot Coffee @ 50 Wagstaff Dr.

This coffee shop has many locations throughout the city, but it's worth making the trek down to their headquarters on Wagstaff to check out the amazing space and watch the warehouse in operation. Pilot is also known for their coffee cupping sessions and rigorous barista training programs, so you can be certain they really know their coffee. They even have coffee flights! This location closes at 4:00 pm, but there is a Leftfield Brewery right next door to head over to after if you prefer to stay out late.

## Maggie Hung STUDENT LIFE

Romance is an *art*, but can it be a *science*?

While UofT boasts an ample collection of architectural wonders, facilities and events, the dating scene on campus leaves much to be desired. In true rom-com fashion, here are some tips on creating your own meet-cutes that could totally happen on campus. Use these to *engineer* your own rom-com moment, or play cupid and *orchestrate* a moment between two friends. Will it stay as a one-time interaction, or will something stronger build? Well, that's your own *business to manage*.

A prerequisite is to dress to impress. This is the number one rule of getting noticed on campus. With a hefty student population of 61,000, the best way to express your subculture, your whimsy, and your taste is to wear it.

Hart House is a wonderful historic building at the heart of campus. It also features a slew of tiny tables in its library. When you're swamped with school-work, consider asking someone cute to share a table there. Sharing a small table with someone else in a cosy little nook and stealing glances is the definition of the forced proximity trope, and you can even get your work done in the process. Naturally, this can be replicated across different libraries. Just don't do this in a library with a silent zone. Take your budding romance elsewhere!

If your schedule can only fit school, it's not over for you. Consider targeting a classmate as your academic rival and show up to your professor's office

hours the same time they do. Compete to leave the best impression. Get familiar with their answers in tutorials and show up with a handful of rebuttals. Drive them crazy.

To attract the sentimental meticulous type (think Amélie Poulain), consider scattering your books around campus. Choose an author that's generally regarded as cool (Didion? Kundera?), and really commit by heavily annotating it. Ooze the very essence of your personality in those annotations. Remember to leave your contact information so they can find you and give you a chance to express your gratitude. As with many things, this has a start-up cost and the return is pretty unpredictable. But just entertain my vision....

With U of T's reputation as a commuter school, we're really underutilising the commuter experience here. Next time there's a service interruption between St George and St Andrew (and there will be a next time), approach a fellow stranded student. Really listen to those grievances about the TTC. Commuter solidarity is a pretty good foundation to build on.

Baz Luhrmann's Romeo + Juliet features a really cute moment when Leonardo DiCaprio and Katie Danes lock eyes from opposite sides of an aquarium. Luckily for you, this can be replicated on campus. Consider perusing the Robarts exhibition on the ground floor and brood until somebody comes to meet your gaze.

Hungry? Show up to various guest speaker events for the free pizza. Eventually you'll be acutely aware

of a fellow classmate doing the same. Approach them, pull them aside and tell them you're onto them. The mutual recognition, shame and eventual collusion is something straight out of a movie (it's from Fight Club).

You should always advocate for yourself, and this goes the same for your grades. Don't be ashamed of asking for a grade bump, or at least a breakdown of an assignment you're dissatisfied with. Who knows, maybe you'll run into a fellow classmate who has the same angry protestations as you. And together, to the horror of your poor TA, you'll be unstoppable.

Some more scenarios that are not out of a rom-com, but would really belong in a thriller:

If you'd like to take things into your own hands, the basement of Gerstein library has rolling shelves. This is perfect for terrorising someone by sandwiching them between books. Alternatively, you could orchestrate an accident where you're the one stuck in the shelves and call over someone cute for help.

One of my friends got to know someone by accidentally dropping her water bottle from a balcony seat at Con Hall. I'm not encouraging this in any way. Just thought it was a cool concept. Don't use a metallic bottle please.

So that's it! An extensive but not exhaustive list of meet-cutes at UofT. I wish you the best of luck with your endeavours, and don't forget to have fun!



# Concert Review - Dizzy

**Rebecca Sacco**  
**ARTS & CULTURE**

Lights, camera, action! As simple as that, Oshawa, Ontario's very own Dizzy played at the Danforth Music Hall on October 26th, and it was a magical night. Dizzy, lead by Katie Munshaw with band members Charlie, Alex and Mackenzie Spencer, created such a fun and electric atmosphere.

Dizzy has three albums titled Baby Teeth, The Sun and Her Scorch, and Dizzy. The concert was for their self-titled album Dizzy. This emerging band has been making music for many years and even won a Juno Award in 2019. I first heard about this band through a YouTube ad and became addicted to their sound and music right away. When they announced the tour dates, I was excited to have my hands on a pair of these coveted tickets. It did not disappoint. It was a packed venue

with people dancing, bopping their heads and shuffling their feet.

Most of the songs are light and upbeat tunes. Many are vulnerable and show a sensitive side of the band. The stage was simple, only the instruments and a few spotlights on the band members. The lighting would switch between white, blue, red, purple and orange. There were minimal props, but when performing "Barking Dog," Katie put on boxing gloves, which are from the music video. The transitions between faster and slower songs were perfect. The energy from the crowd was enjoyable. It was a vibe! At one point Katie needed to restart a song, as she was having difficulty hearing the music, which added a few laughs and cheers from the crowd as she began to sing again. Katie transitioned from song to song, occasionally chatting with the crowd, but she kept the crowd engaged with her beautiful voice. The transitions between songs also had moments of keyboard tunes

and fade-to-black moments. She roamed across the stage many times, occasionally skipping, and went by the barricade closer towards the crowd.

This show was filmed for CBC Music and you can find the concert footage on CBC Music's YouTube channel. Personally, I have been to many concerts and there are many times where I close my eyes and soak in the sounds of everything around me. I did that many times at this concert and I still think about this show.

If you are looking for some new music I would recommend Dizzy. My personal favourite songs are "Stupid 4 U," "Birthmark," "Close," "Sunflower," "The Magician," "Stars & Moons," and "Roman Candles." Overall, this was a lovely time and I cannot wait to see them live again.

# Just because I survived Travis Scott's concert doesn't mean I had a good time

**Kiran Basra**  
**ARTS & CULTURE**

I love hanging out with my cousin, so when she said she was coming to Toronto from Ottawa to see Travis Scott, I jumped at the chance to tag along. After all, SZA's "Love Galore" is one of my favourite songs. Most of my favourite artists had collaborated with Travis at some point, and I'd liked what I'd heard. Yes, I hadn't listened to Utopia, his latest album, but how bad could it be?

Travis Scott is a great collaborator because he's friends with great artists. But he doesn't have the vocal skills or the mind for lyrics to carry an album so sprawling. His production is over-grandiose to the point where it feels muddy. I looped that album all December and I didn't like a single song on it. Then I looped ASTROWORLD and I didn't like a single song on that, either. Also, if you've forgotten like I had: it was Scott who caused the deaths at the Astroworld Festival back in 2019. He's indirectly responsible for 10 people literally suffocating to death standing up, because he was encouraging all the people around them to rush the stage. I was up in the nosebleeds, so I wasn't afraid for my life. I was afraid for the security guards, though, who are not paid nearly enough to fight a rich kid high on party drugs for the sake of a man telling that rich kid

to act as crazy as he can.

Teezo Touchdown was supposed to perform, and for whatever reason didn't show up. Instead, Scott's DJ played a half-hour set made exclusively of Drake songs, like they were trying to hint Travis would bring him on. Travis himself started a respectable 90 minutes late, coming on stage as different parts of the labyrinthine platform they'd built for him erupted into flame. Everyone lost their shit. The people on the floor pressed as close to the bars as they could. And Scott's energy was good – rapping himself instead of lip-synching, leaping into the air with every line. For a moment, I thought, This might actually be really fun.

Five minutes later, he stopped. He told us we needed to scream so loud the top of Scotiabank Arena would come off. So we did: "Travis, Travis, Travis!" at the top of our lungs. He stood there and took it all in. I realized he didn't have any backup dancers. He intended to entertain 50,000 people for two hours on the force of his own charisma. Then the lights got crazy, and fire shot up from the stage, and he started rapping again... then five minutes later he stopped to catch his breath and watch us all hang on to his every word.

This pattern kept repeating, but he did other things, too. His favourite thing to do was to pick someone out of the crowd – he'd make

everyone scream for his attention for minutes first – so they could climb onto a skull-shaped platform suspended from the ceiling and lose their shit. He didn't bring on any other artists; just Travis. Well, and his dozens of stagehands, there to set off more fire, hook people onto the skull for liability purposes, and protect him from the crowd when he left the stage for his costume change. At one point, he put three of them in Bigfoot costumes and had them roam the stage without spotlights on them. This was the most he was willing to share the attention.

Most of his set list featured other rappers, so I had been expecting him to cover their lyrics as well. Instead, he just ended the songs before their verses. My cousin was most excited for him to play "FE!N," and he did. And then he played it again. By the second time screaming along, I had a moment of mortification, realizing the chorus is literally just the word "fiend" 20 times in a row. By the fifth time (because he played it five times), when people around me were taking off their shirts and throwing them into the audience and the security guards had formed a human wall to stop a crowd crush with their own bodies... I was wondering how someone so self-obsessed, reckless, and mediocre could sell out Scotiabank Arena.



# Catching Up: Trying to make the most out of my last semester

**James Raposo**  
**STUDENT LIFE**

*A reflection on my time at university and challenging myself to do more in my final term.*

A new year, a new semester, and I am imbued with a new (yet old) sense of motivation to finally achieve more than just coasting through classes and maybe hanging out with one friend a week. My time at this lovely institution has honestly been rife with an unpleasant, soul-crushing, “keep your head down and don’t talk to anyone”-inducing feeling of isolation and an envy for people enjoying themselves doing extra-curricular activities.

I always said that being a commuter student at a university where everyone and everything is so entrenched in the city is like starting by running backwards. Compound that sense of isolation with two-ish years of interaction behind a screen and then interaction behind a mask—which is worse, who’s to say?—and I can understand where that dread has crawled out from.

My friend likes to make fun of me for saying the same thing every semester: “this term, I am going to get involved.” I have tried to keep

consistent with my initial motivation time and time again to do things like write articles, join clubs, meet new people and just be a part of the pre-formed community that UofT is while I’m still here. However, an irksome cocktail of burnout, anxiety, and self-doubt tend to get the best of me before I even get going.

This year I am hoping things are different. I am actively trying to be intentional in doing things that make me scared or uneasy but in that good way; the kind of feeling that you get in your spine that tingles when you have no idea what to expect. Following that awkward feeling has gotten me to do things I normally wouldn’t and has forced me to stick by the commitments I have made. Like volunteering at Caffiends or writing this article (which I am totally not doing ~2 hours before the deadline).

It can be really, tremendously easy to blame circumstances and the weird turn of events that have put me in the zombie-like rut for the first 3 or so years of my university tenure. And it can also be really easy to blame myself for not doing more and making an effort; I even find myself tending to disfigure my current self from my flawed past. Neither of these factors can fully encompass the weird ways our life comes to be what it is. So, in my last year, I am

trying to go easy on myself and recognize that I am a composite of everything I have done and learned while also not trying to worry about the unfortunate side to unkind fate.

In reality, my time at UofT hasn’t been all that bad, and I do find myself quite fond of the memories I have made here. Could I have done more during first year? Probably! But upon understanding myself, growing, and learning, I now know that I likely just wasn’t at that point in my life to put myself out there and do those things I so envied that others could do. I would assess people who were able to do 5 different clubs and write dozens of articles as “jobless behaviour,” which wasn’t really nice of me now that I think about it.

To the chagrin of my friend who jabs at me, I believe this year will be different to those prior. I am ready to take on the world! Not really, but through following what scares me, I hope to actually be one of those people with “jobless behaviour.” The year is still early and a lot can change in a couple months, but I hope to stick by my vow of getting the most out of this last term. Who knows? Maybe I’ll have a chance to write about how I fare at the end of this semester.

## Yay, I’m Finished! — Now What?

**Catherine Dumé**  
**STUDENT LIFE**

December 22, 2024, was the day I, a 5th-year U of T student, finally submitted my final undergrad assignment. It was a moment of ecstasy. After five long years of commuting two gruelling hours daily, surviving the pandemic, writing over 200 academic essays, writing for two newspapers, launching a podcast, splitting my time between five committees, and running a disability advocacy club – I was officially finished.

Everyone asks me, “How does it feel?”

Truthfully? It’s weird.

On the one hand, I’m proud, even relieved. Yet, on the other, I’m unsettled. I have been trapped in a trance of nostalgia and anxiety about the future. I may have climbed to the other side of the mountain in victory, but in a way, I have returned full circle to a new, uncertain beginning. It’s like I’m back in first year and I have no idea what lies on the horizon.

This “weird” feeling worsens when I realize I

have completed my bachelor’s degree halfway through the academic year. At the beginning of the winter semester, St. George campus is busy once again, with students scrambling to find their classes, Sidney Smith is on fire, the Medsci building floods, and U of T is crowned as the number one sustainable university in the world as they build a new sustainable building – out of wood???

Yet where am I? At home, in my PJs, scrolling through TikTok, waking up at noon. I crave to hang out with my friends who are still in uni, but they’re usually busy.

Unlike other students who finish their degree in April and will most likely graduate in the Summer, because I finished in December, I get to wait six months for my graduation in June.

Yippee.

So the question becomes, what does an expected graduate do with six months of nothing?

After bleeding my fingers dry to the bone working on papers for 4/2 years, I have decided

to apply for graduate school for 2024-2025 and find a full-time job – instead of rewarding myself with a deserved break.

Don’t get me wrong, I took full advantage of the Christmas break, watching TV shows, eating good food, and hanging out with friends. I even went skating – though I ended up getting a mild concussion.

But being a U of T student the idea of doing nothing feels wrong. It’s like I have been conditioned to be highly productive.

So this semester, I’m still writing for newspapers, working on my committees, public speaking at conferences, applying to grad school, working full time (potentially), and working on passion projects like finally writing that high fantasy novel that has been a dust-bunny in my brain since January 2018.

I know you may be excited to escape U of T now after all the tears you have shed this past semester. But you’ll miss it terribly as you take the first step into the “real world.” Wishing for simpler times.



# Stop thinking, Start feeling.

## Michelle Zi Hui Wang PERSONAL ESSAY

Growing up, my mother always praised me for my so-called “wits and logical personality,” often saying that “a smart girl is a safe girl”. However, every February in some weirdly scheduled subconscious routine, I become momentarily aware of the part that intellectualizing my feelings plays in the downfall of many treasured interpersonal relationships. In the month of love, my mind is a mess and my heart is filled with an icky yet hopeful mix of envy, admiration and yearning to one day, feel as fearlessly as the so-called “dramatic and emotional” women that society so grossly deems inferior.

From an evolutionary perspective, intellectualization and avoiding pain is a natural survival instinct that is undoubtedly beneficial. Even though avoidance and the “flight” instinct keeps us safe and guarded from threats, it’s difficult to truly live if we spend our entire time alive running away from hypothetical hurt. When

we experience pain, the buildup of resentment, anger and sadness can be difficult to trust and oftentimes, it seems that shutting down is safer than staying. Humans are social animals and we need each other in times of good and bad. In my experience, intellectualizing feelings makes it difficult to empathize with not only myself but also others. When we cannot process our own experience it is extremely difficult to detach from the situation and think from other perspectives which makes forgiving ourselves and others challenging. Often when I’m reflecting on past conflicts, it is difficult to remember how it made me feel as I personally reject vulnerability and instead, habitually collect and organize information about the situation kind of like a robot. I wish that I learned earlier that just as it’s important to stay strong, it’s crucial to let yourself be vulnerable.

Growth and acceptance as a whole is also limited when we are stuck in the constant rationalization of painful situations such as a breakup which are messy, complex and illogical in a way

that no amount of thinking can produce and correct nor satisfactory answer. So I’d say the best way to deal with such a thing is to cry a river, build a bridge and get the hell over it. Life is too short to willingly strand yourself on a deserted island when paradise is just a few steps away.

Of course, when I say it is essential we feel more and think less to live the full human experience, it is in the context of relationships and exclusive of those moments when you’ve just got to use your head instead of your heart like choosing between an obvious red flag (I’m talking dangerous, might-get-kidnapped kinda red) of a tinder match or the sweet and nerdy cutie in your math class. Admittedly, I am writing this as someone who still struggles getting in touch with their emotions. I also can’t provide any quick cure in a 500 something word article, because there is none. These patterns are hard to get out of but please be patient with yourself because you deserve to be treated gently. So dear reader, I will meet you on the brighter, warmer side once we both leave our comfort zone and feel all there is to feel in this life.

# steaming mugs, stirring spoons

## Yujin Oh PERSONAL ESSAY

it's a quiet morning.

i glance at the sink. it's full, of course.

maybe someone else will do it, i think.

but i'm still awake, and i hear mayumi's soft snores behind me.

i quietly undo the mess of clean dishes. i grab the chopsticks first, carefully plucking them from the drying rack. the round ones are mine — they have little ridges at their tips. the angular ones, maissie's — the blue flowers remind me of chopsticks from back home. and the brown ones are soda's; i picture them taking tiny bites of their crab meat rice bowl with those chopsticks. i sometimes wonder why they don't just eat it with a spoon.

i quietly place them back in the drawer, still aware of mayumi's sleeping frame.

the drawer is overflowing with utensils. ice-cream scoop, three rice paddles, two vegetable peelers.

i go back to the drying rack, and i know what everyone's dishes look like — lauren's ikea set i often steal, mayumi's nutella-melting bowl, soda's brown mugs that steam with miso soup, maissie's white set that's quite tricky to tell apart from lauren's, and kit's shot glasses that carried us through countless drunken nights.

i put each dish back in their respective cabinets.

i continue unloading the dishes — the knife that i learned how to finely chop garlic with, the cutting board that's strictly vegetable-only, the pot i used to boil lauren's unlabelled mystery soup, the little spoons we would eat cookies and cream ice cream with, with chocolate syrup drizzled on top. the tongs that transfer mayumi's signature ramen noodles from the pot to the bowl. the spatula jade uses to make miso udon. the glass cup that survived unlike its siblings.

at some point mayumi stirs awake, and asks me what time it is. i tell her it's 9:47am. still a few hours left until our exams.

i turn the water on to tackle the dirty dishes. i remember the all-nighter snacks.

maissie wakes up and comes into the kitchen.

it's a quiet morning

but i know there will always be someone here to share a meal with.



# A Cautionary Tale

Simbarashe Mutika

POETRY

Warmth is folded away as unwilling prey,  
Wrapped in worn, fading memories,  
Swathed in subtropical musings.  
Warmth is stashed in a den by Orion's bard,  
By the hunter that swallows the sun.  
Dread the cold that stalks the night.

Falling from above, a powdery veil;  
To mask an ageing coat,  
To cloak a pursuing remnant,  
To hide an excited pace-  
Shed from Sirius' mane.

The sky is miserable,  
Full of grey emptiness save for that pallid golden lamp.  
Mocking with its gloriously worthless blazingly bright nothingness.  
Offering pretentious promises of sweet nothings -  
Cruel deceit of the darkest mind, of the dimmest kind.

Dread the air, and its claws  
Its jagged shards that rip and tear  
Every gulp a yielding to flared nostrils,  
A flurry of motion,  
Jabs and buffets and bites.

Little heart, little heart,  
Won't you let me come in?  
It huffs...  
And it puffs...  
And it blows...  
Ergo, it all comes down.

# sweet, red wine

Giuliana Di Sanzo

POETRY

we're drinking strawberry flavoured wine out of red solo cups and I can't help but notice the hair you move out of her face, she's close enough now to see the endless mistakes we've made

as she leans into you to whisper in your ear, your eyes catch mine and I feel myself fall victim to your longing gaze as I do with the cheap liquor

you pass me by, a phantom of the person I once knew who has come back from the beyond to continue the haunting you started all those years ago when you first picked me out of that endless strawberry field

meaninglessly, you grab my hand and pull me close, but being near you makes it impossible to ignore the drunken thoughts I find myself having as I sip on more of that sweet, red wine

Dear \_\_\_\_\_ name,

Since we met \_\_\_\_\_ length of time ago, we've become [fast/close/unstable/toxic] friends. I've had some of the [best/worst/weirdest] moments of my life in your company. I once heard someone say that you should always treasure your friendships, but that person had no idea how badly I want to [hold hands with/make out with/get married to/.... ;)] you.

Let's wreck this friendship. Come to \_\_\_\_\_ place on \_\_\_\_\_ date at \_\_\_\_\_ time, where we'll if you want this to work, actually plan an activity. Before you say no, remember: you've done stupider things with me (\_\_\_\_\_ ) memory/inside joke, and I'm WAY better than your ex \_\_\_\_\_ name.

We both know this is going to end in [heartbreak/murder-suicide/dating for 3 weeks and then having a weird awkward breakup and never speaking again/2.5 kids and a dog]. But I'm desperate to start anyways.

With [love/fear/unbridled lust],



# Love Is The Hardest Thing We Do

**Kyle Newcombe**  
**PERSONAL ESSAY**

During this past exam season and going into the Christmas holidays, I took time to reflect on the year that was then coming to a close. So much had changed for me within those twelve months, and it all coalesced into a brilliant collage of the year that had been. New friends. New experiences. A new relationship. And through it all, so much change within myself. Surely, the year ahead would begin with yet more positive experiences and continued strengthening of relationships. Surely.

Instead, as I write this, I am heartbroken and lost. The rate of change of my life just couldn't seem to slow down, and the brilliant spark in my life that was love and my relationship is suddenly gone. I've cried. I've despaired. And everyday, I long for what I have lost. Every day, I worry that I'll never again find what I once had. Every day, I'm terrified by the prospect of loneliness. Sometimes, there's nothing I want more than to turn back the clock to relive even the most simple moments, when life wasn't so painful.

Despite all that I've lost, I can't help but to gain perspective and feel oddly grateful. My relationships have made me happier than I ever thought I could be, even while their ending has left me more despairing than I ever thought I would be. Love has changed me in so many ways, and I'm all the better for it. Love has made me more empathetic, more emotionally expressive, and a better friend and partner. Love has challenged me in ways I never could have imagined, not just emotionally, but in unexpected ways including socially and intellectually. Love has made possible connections with other people on a level I once thought impossible. My friends have noticed this too, even remarking on just how much I've grown and changed in the time they've known me. I am a product of the relationships I've been a part of, and I wouldn't have it any other way. Don't get me wrong, I certainly have my fair share of regrets, and I don't go a single day without examining countless ways I could have done certain things differently. But from all of this experience, I have formed some new ideas to share on the often tumultuous and unpredictable world of relationships.

First, to the bystanders and cautious participants: I completely understand you. For the longest time, I was one of you. I once thought that I would never find anything remotely resembling a strong romantic relationship, and yet I have. My heart has been cracked wide open, and it's the best thing that ever happened to me. That being said, I understand if you choose to leave serious relationship building for after you graduate, or perhaps even later. Your priorities are your priorities, and nobody should be telling you anything different. If you're academically ambitious, want to remain focused on school, and/or want to get your career started without inviting the abject chaos that is love and relationships into your

life, by all means. Be your best self. Aggressively pursue your own goals. But never forget: there will always be a place in your life for love, friendship, and companionship, and there are always people out there ready to fill those roles for you. I only encourage you to remain optimistic about the future and not forget about the meaningful role love has to play, whether you choose to seek it out now or not.

Next, to those who are in relationships: don't take a second of what you have for granted. Too many relationships fail based on the complacency of one or both parties; this isn't just true of romantic relationships but also friendships. Make an effort. Set goals. Be a team. Communicate. Spend time together. Do whatever it is that you think will not only sustain your relationship, but make it stronger. If you find yourself in a relationship that isn't working, do some self reflection and identify possible solutions. If you think there's any chance at all of saving something meaningful, try to. Don't give up. But if the relationship is truly and completely broken, don't drag it out. Sometimes, despite how hard it can be, it's truly best to move on.

Finally, to the lovelorn and heartbroken: never lose hope. I know now, better than ever, that the despair can seem insurmountable. Love and loss are a powerful combination, and they can and will knock you out flat. There will no doubt be challenging times ahead, and odds are you're going to feel emotions you never wanted to feel in quantities you didn't believe possible. But time is on your side. Take the time to process, and always remember that others are there to support you. Turn to your friends and family, and remember that even if things aren't working out for you romantically, there is still plenty of love in your life. Above all, even at your lowest moments: keep believing. Keep believing in chemistry, in chance encounters, in new experiences and people, and especially in yourself. Take it from me, someone who's been through two breakups in the past year with absolutely no inherent reason to be optimistic: there's love out there for everyone. Life is chaos and the future is entirely uncertain, yet people, every day, keep finding love and building relationships. Yes, oftentimes things don't work out. Sometimes it's because of timing, sometimes it's compatibility, sometimes it's unrequited feelings, and yes, unfortunately, sometimes it's the indifferent and cruel machine that is this university making it damn near impossible to build anything that lasts. Sometimes, most heartbreakingly of all, love itself isn't enough. Love is uniquely challenging, and can only be described as the hardest thing that we as people do. But precisely because it's the hardest thing we do, it's also the best thing that we do. Love is an active process, not a passive one, and the fact that we keep finding love and engaging in meaningful relationships is a true testament to the human condition. No matter what may lay ahead, no matter what emotional turmoil may come your way, remember that in this world, love exists for everyone.

Happy Valentine's Day.



# The Secret Chord

## A. W. Jenkins SHORT STORY

The faint sound of a closing door pulled the receptionist from her book. In front of her stood a tall young man, holding a tray of red coffee cups up in one hand and a green plastic clipboard in the other. Slipping the clipboard under his arm, he pulled out his wallet and fished around for a while before pulling out a thin plastic card, which he waved around a few times until the clipboard began to slide out from where he had tucked it. It was clear that he'd underestimated the volume of things he needed to carry in the chaos of getting through the storm outside. The woman shifted over to the right side of her desk and clicked a buzzer, opening the first set of doors for the young man to awkwardly shuffle through. She almost hadn't heard him come in over the constant barrage of hail hitting the front room's tall windows. Passing through the gates, the intern noticed this noise as well; more specifically, he noted how abruptly it seemed to dissipate as he entered from the foyer into the lab's sheltered centre. He was aware of the extent to which the building was protected from the sounds of the outside world, but they had never been loud enough for him to notice the sheer polarity of the whole experience. As he came to the inner gate, the young man tapped his access card and crossed through the final threshold; with his head down and a clipboard still held at his side, he made his way from the entrance of the lab to the desk of Dr. Ado, placing the now lukewarm coffee on her desk. She smiled, but her eyes remained glued to the console.

The red light fixture blinked twice with an audible tone. Looking over, the doctor gave a nod of confirmation to her colleague before quickly swivelling back into position at her desk. They were running diagnostics—boring, paltry routines they had done a million times before. Today though, there was a certain buzz in the air; try as they might, nobody could deny the excitement, or the infectious energy that came along with it. If everything went well in their preliminary analysis, which was fully expected to be the case, then today would be the day when the experiment the staff had dedicated years of their lives to would finally come to fruition. It was bittersweet, of course. The doctor had many fond memories of her time on the program, and of the friends she had made among her colleagues. But the satisfaction of finally completing what they had set out to do, proving to the world that their research wasn't in vain: that was more sweet than bitter. She took short sips of the cold, black coffee as she typed away at her keyboard, but it was becoming harder to focus with each passing minute. Before this point, Dr. Ado had been able to occupy her mind in this work by convincing herself that she had fallen behind in it somehow—a trick that had gotten her through the most strenuous points of her university education. As she came close to finishing her tasks, though, the reality of the responsibility she would soon bear began to weigh on her nerves.

Being the creative mind behind the project and having written the theoretical paper that inspired the university to invest in the experiment, "Can Man Hear Beyond its Limits? An Analysis of the Extent of Human Auditory Understanding," it was decided by upper management that she would be the first to test the machine's capabilities. A half-year ago, when the university was still funding the project, they had assigned someone more experienced to be the test subject; now, though, her employers were less enthusiastic to expand the project's budget any more than they had already done, and so Dr. Ado was decided to be the best fit among the facility's current staff. This was an honour, of course. But it also made her something of an interpreter, and the idea that she would have to put such a novel experience to words gave her more than a few butterflies. She recognized, though, that this was a juvenile kind of anxiety, unbecoming of a researcher such as herself, and so she did her best to stay focused on the task at hand.

Everything came to a head at about three o'clock in the afternoon. As the last simulations finished running, the fruits of the office's combined labour were clear: the experiment would run today. And so, as to not waste any time, Dr. Ado was removed from her work to begin preparations. As she was outfitted with metal and wire and strapped with all manner of equipment, the doctor felt her anxieties turn to excitement. To be a part of something so important—to go beyond the limits of the human experience, even in such a small way—made her feel like Neil Armstrong walking on the moon. It took about an hour to get everything needed for the test into place, while the rest of the staff ran around her to complete whatever menial tasks they had yet to finalize; all the while, Dr. Ado sat still in her chair, answering questions, filling out paperwork and making sure everything was in proper order for what was about to happen. The office itself, which was straddled around the tempered glass walls of the auditory chamber, had become crowded. The rest of the offices had work to do, sure—but the spectacle here had attracted almost every other researcher in the

building to watch the experiment play out. Some of these people had done a little work for the project, and those who hadn't were nevertheless invested in what might happen. Besides, it was still storming outside. Anything to get away from all the noise.

About fifteen minutes now. At this point, the doctor had completely gotten over her previous worries. The scientists who chose to watch the demonstration take place were all now seated in the observation area, and the diagnostics had been finished for about a half hour. As such, the researchers previously busy with tests took their place at whichever console they were responsible for, and the few interns who had been working to help get everything organised before now found their own seats alongside those visiting. One of the researchers helping to get Dr. Ado organised for the experiment spread a clear paste on both of her temples and along the ridge of her brow, producing a tingling sensation; another folded cold, carbon fabric around her neck. With this, she was prepared for the device to be fitted onto her head. Since the noise-cancelling effects of the device would prevent her from receiving any external stimuli, she went over exactly what needed to be done, and in what order, to ensure everything would happen smoothly. Once convinced, she signalled for the insertion to begin. A slow, whirring tone rang out as the device moved downward, clicking into the metal outfitting of her suit, and in a moment it was properly fitted onto her form. All was quiet.

Three minutes. She had counted the seconds, which wasn't necessary—the clock built into the chamber's structure was perfectly accurate. But she could never bring herself to rely on these things, and besides, it gave the doctor something to do while she waited. The observation deck—which was fully visible from her position—was alight with movement, as researchers shared their guesses as to what might happen and their fingers moved at a mile a minute to write every little thought that came to them. Dr. Ado hoped with all her heart that she could describe the sound in a way that would satisfy their expectations, or at the very least provide enough data to have made the test worthwhile. At this point, the clock counted down from ten. With a quick nod and exchanging of words, the men at the console inserted their keys and brought the machine to life; in an instant, the unheard tone filled her ears.

A blinding light melted her eyes.

As they formed again, she saw the light shape itself into winding winds without end, their absoluteness pulling her in. They wrapped around her skin, and it melted too. But the pain, sweet and without wounds, was deserved, and she felt a certain satisfaction in her suffering. She let this unending weave consume her vision, and one colour became all others in an instant; falling into her own horizon, the doctor witnessed the creation of her beloved world.

A reaching hand pulled her into the earth, and her face pressed into the wet ground. But she kept going. She saw the dirt as it was made, the space between it; she saw the elements within it, and the elements within them; she saw the atoms, and particles, and everything beyond them; she saw? No, she did not see. Her eyes had melted. She felt? She felt nothing. She simply was.

An overbearing cosmos. An exploding star. A blade of grass; all within her skin. She was the grass, and the cosmos, and the star. She expanded to fill the unending void.

The blade cuts the star. The cosmos consume it; they share in their hunt. The tone became solid; she stood upon it and wept. She could not weep. Her eyes had melted.

He watched.

She heard her mother's voice. She heard the mountain's snow-capped peak. She heard her sins drip down her neck.

The mysteries of creation, endless and without form, seeped into her skin, as she struggled to understand what love could be wrought from a cycle of endless decay.

Her mind learned all as soon as it forgot.

She heard His voice bellow, split between six billion souls.

and then  
she heard  
nothing.

Despite interviewing everyone who was present at the time of the incident, police were unable to deduce exactly what had gone wrong during the experiment. The immediate consequences of it, though, were described to them in gruesome detail. It took forensics weeks to remove Dr. Ado from the walls of the chamber. Tragically, despite the best efforts of the department, her bones would never be found.



# A Series of Letters

**Jackie W. Borland**  
**CREATIVE**

January 18th, 1626

Your majesty, I have arrived at the fort as you commanded. This old castle is in need of some desperate repairs if it is to defend, and the men are lazy. You know I am loyal to you, my Queen, but I do wonder why you have me sent all this way. No matter the cause, I shall do all that is within my power to prepare this fort for siege. Only King Frederich knows if he truly intends to attack, but I intend to protect your realm to my dying breath.

-Yours, Lady Elizabeth.

February 1st, 1626

I am overjoyed to hear from you again my dear Elizabeth, and now I know I can expect you to receive this letter in about a fortnight. In truth, it was never my wish to send my knight to such lengths. But as you said, the fort is decrepit, the men are lazy, and you are the only one loyal enough to earn my full, unfiltered trust. You will get the job done, and get it done well. I shall try to calm my heart with that knowledge, though I do already miss you so. Stay safe.

-Her Majesty, Queen Mary.

February 15th, 1626

I received your letter in good spirits this morn, and all work was halted as I rushed to my chambers to read it. I daresay the envelope still smells of the castle. I am overjoyed to hear of your confidence in me, and that you were as loath to part as I. My heart aches to return to the castle, but I shall take pride in knowing that I am your most trusted knight. You bring me great honour with these words your majesty, I shall keep them at my bedside to inspire me. And I will return with all the fairest flowers of the countryside for your paintings.

-Yours, Lady Elizabeth.

February 29th, 1626

To hear of your joy at my words brings the same joy upon my breast, and our hearts are warmed as one. Court and castle proceedings have been exceptionally boring without my beloved companion to keep me sane. I worry incessantly, please come home soon.

-Yours, Queen Mary.

March 14th, 1626

King Frederich approaches. Your raven was nearly killed delivering this message. The men are preparing. I have little time, but much to say. Your majesty, as I face my demise I find myself no longer willing to live a life untrue. I love you. Since the very day that you knighted me, I have felt a connection to you such as I have felt with no man. Your faith in me nourishes me as a full meal. If I survive, I would only that you tend to my wounds and caress me in your arms. Now my truth is revealed, and I may finally die having lived a true life.

-Yours, E.

March 30th, 1626

O my dear Elizabeth, I am full of sorrow. I too, love you, though never had I allowed myself to utter those heavenly words. My dearest knight, if you yet live, please, come home to me. I desire naught but to hold you in my arms, and forevermore keep you close at hand. Your place is at my side.

-Your lover, Mary

March 22nd, 1626

My life has been spared, and thus it is yours. I return now to be with you once more. I have yet to receive your correspondence, thus I ride with worry upon my breast. I hope you will have me, for I am yours.

-Your beloved knight, Elizabeth



# Which Fictional Character Are You?

## Spill about your love life to reveal your literary embodiment

**Sofia Moniz**  
**MAGAZINE QUIZ**

### What are you looking for in a relationship?

- A. Literally anything. I am so lonely
- B. To be left alone
- C. Enemies to friends to lovers
- D. Something casual
- E. To fall madly in love

### What's your red flag?

- A. I get attached too quickly
- B. I isolate myself
- C. My temper
- D. I drink too much
- E. My naivete

### How do you meet people?

- A. Mysterious phone calls
- B. Online
- C. Exploring forests
- D. People just pursue me
- E. At parties

### What's your go-to romantic gesture?

- A. Sharing a bed with my best friend because I'm "cold"
- B. Texting them "i love you" after ghosting them for a month
- C. Writing a poem (but a good one not a cheesy one)
- D. I'm always on the receiving end
- E. Running away together

### Your ideal partner:

- A. Has gone through a traumatic event with me
- B. Has a 3 days on, 1 day off work schedule
- C. Is a doctor
- D. Is the one I can't have
- E. Is someone my parents would never approve of

### Results:

If you picked mostly A you are: Eleanor from *The Haunting of Hill House*. Journeys end in lovers meeting, but your journey is just beginning. You're an endearing character with a tendency to romanticize. Consider getting together with your bestie! Bonus points if you go on a weekend getaway to an old mansion (with only one bed). Sure, you might hear some strange noises and may wake up to find your clothes covered in blood, but that will just bring you closer together!

If you picked mostly B you are: The unnamed protagonist from *My Year of Rest and Relaxation*. You are in your bed rotting era! Maybe you're jaded from previous relationships gone bad, or maybe you just like being alone. Who could blame you? Focusing on yourself is a great idea so take your time, but don't let your youth pass you by. Open a window once in a while! You should also probably ditch your quack psychiatrist. Get some help!

If you picked mostly C you are: Anne from *Anne of Green Gables*. You are smart, articulate, and headstrong, and you know what you want. Sometimes your temper gets you in trouble, but people mostly find it endearing! You can often be found picking wildflowers or quoting from the works of famous poets. On your next visit to your hometown, reconnect with a childhood friend (or, even better, a childhood enemy). You may just find a kindred spirit.

If you picked mostly D you are: Brett from *The Sun Also Rises*. You're charming and stunning, and you turn heads wherever you go. You're not looking for anything serious right now. Maybe you're getting over your ex, or recovering from your latest situation. Maybe you're just having fun. Even though you could get almost anyone, you have a tendency to go for guys you can't have, for one reason or another.

If you picked mostly E you are: Juliet from *Romeo and Juliet*. Do NOT run away with that boy. You're still young, there is no rush! Rebel in other ways! Get a tattoo! Pierce your belly button! Cut your own bangs! Literally anything else! You may think you're mature for your age but that's not a real thing. You have a long life ahead of you. There's plenty of time to decide what you want out of it.



..... ★★★★  
FILM REVIEWS FROM YOU  
IN COLLABORATION WITH CINSSU

### An Immortal Tale of Love and Ambition: The Red Shoes (1948)

By Burak Batu Tunçel

Are you caught up in a dilemma between love and work? Is the difficulty of balancing the two bothering you? It's a very humane problem that seems to have existed for a long time, as the Hans Christian Andersen fairy tale "The Red Shoes" shows.

The 1948 film by Michael Powell & Emeric Pressburger, which carries the same name with the tale, is about an ambitious ballerina named Victoria Page. She becomes famous after appearing in the ballet adaptation of "The Red Shoes," by prestigious impresario Boris Lermontov. After she starts a relationship with composer Julian Craster, Lermontov's jealousy leads to a parting of ways which result in tragedy.

Admirable for its still-incredible Technicolor cinematography, what makes this film so fascinating is how strongly and detailedly the story is told. The use of symbols and motifs strengthen the artistic value in a remarkable way. The story-within-a-story structure is used cleverly to convey this tale of art and love's conflict.

The film opens with a crowd of university students filling up the theatre for Lermontov's newest ballet. The conflict starts to arise when two people in the crowd start to debate whether music or the dance is more important. Yet, it is worth remembering that ballet, as an art, is the result of these two's relationship with one-another. It also appears that this is a foreshadowing for Victoria (ballerina) and Julian's (musician) affair. So, the film begins.

The first act has many little moments which set Victoria's character as an ambitious character. In the first sequence, while her aunt's binoculars are focused more on the gossipy side of the business by seeking Lermontov in the crowd; Vicky's binoculars are persistently focused on the show happening at the moment.

In a following cocktail party, Vicky replies to Lermontov's question of "Why do you

want to dance?" with "Why do you want to live?". This seems to impress him because he realizes that she is somebody who can give everything for this art, in a Faustian sense, like a soul ready to be sold. This can also be interpreted as another foreshadowing of Vicky giving up her own life because she cannot dance any more. The dangers of such an ambition are recalled through the tale of Icarus, who flew too close to the sun, through the statue of the mythical figure outside Lermontov's office.

Something very creative about the film's narrative is how it tells its story both through cinema and ballet. There is a very elongated ballet sequence halfway through the film, which is a staging of "The Red Shoes" starring Vicky as the lead. This sequence follows the same theme as the film and tells the events of the film in an allegorical way. It also features a hypnotic use of matte paintings, costumes, lighting and editing. The story of the ballet is as follows: a mad shoemaker presents a young girl the perfect dance shoes. After dancing with her cavalier, she finds it impossible to stop so she dances through land and sea, until her death.

When the key characters are matched with those of the film, the girl is Vicky herself, whose life source becomes dancing. The shoemaker is Lermontov, who presents this kind of lifestyle to her, ultimately causing her death. This similarity is further suggested through the editing when the shoemaker's silhouette is superimposed with Lermontov's face. However, the film seems to suggest that he is not the only one guilty in Vicky's death by then shifting the face with Julian's too. It is, after all, the decision between them that drives the ballerina to doom. Julian is also represented through the lover in the ballet. After all, in the end of both the ballet and the film, the lover has to take off the red shoes off of the now dead woman.

All in all, The Red Shoes is a film with a very complex kind of storytelling. It cleverly uses allegory, symbolism, motifs and different mediums. The way the tragedy is sparked throughout the film is very fascinating to me, along with its very humane conflict of making time for love in the modern world where work takes so much time.

### Review of The Tale of the Princess Kaguya (2013)

By Mark N. Metri

I saw a lot of great films for the first time this year. I tend to play it safe—seeking out films and directors that critics generally like—and I enjoy the vast majority of them. Now and then, I encounter a film that impacts me in a very visceral way. These films do not have a common theme or genre, and I often cannot pinpoint precisely what is so special about them. This winter break, I watched, for the first time, one of those films... Isao Takahata's The Tale of the Princess Kaguya (2013).

Takahata adapts the Japanese monogatari, The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter. Kaguya shares most of its major plot with its source material. A bamboo cutter living in the Japanese countryside discovers a baby in a bamboo shoot sent by a deity. Interestingly, Takahata first depicts Kaguya as a fairy-like royal princess before she becomes a baby, already destined for royalty. As the child grows, the bamboo cutter brings her to the city to develop into a royal princess. The girl is given the name "Princess Kaguya." Suitors line up for Kaguya, and she demands that they complete impossible tasks to earn her hand in marriage.

Kaguya's early runtime really felt like I was watching a master at work, not just because of the beautiful (and amazingly original) visuals. I cannot stress how important this relatively plotless period was for the core characters in this film. Takahata explores Kaguya's rapid childhood, where she connects with the natural world as well as the rugged group of village boys. She especially connects with Sute-maru, who acts as a sort of guardian against the dangers of people and the natural world.

The bamboo cutter, who later becomes a frustrating actor in the narrative, shares a moment with "little bamboo" (Kaguya's childhood nickname) that had me in tears. I know that most Ghibli viewers prefer to watch the original Japanese recordings, but I need to point out James Caan's incredible performance as the bamboo cutter. The way his voice collapses and cracks in the most vulnerable moments really enriched the emotional impact. I need to mention the bamboo cutter's playful rift with the village boys, where they chant for her attention, "Little bamboo!" while the bamboo cutter calls back, "Princess, come here," with Caan's voice breaking into tears. Besides the obvious beauty of the moment, I could not help but see the inevitable conflict: the ethereal baby could either be "Little Bamboo" or "Princess Kaguya."

The conflict is where Takahata elevates the story and aligns the visual style and the narrative with his message. At face value, it can seem that the narrative, as well as the white-background watercolor, amplifies the purity of nature, depicting the way in which humans can corrupt and push away a "pure" being like Kaguya. In the source material, the moon princess is sent to earth by Buddhist deities as a punishment. On Earth, she is meant to experience *upādāna*, or material attachments. I think that Takahata challenges these ideas in his interpretation. Rather than fetishizing purity, Takahata presents the negative and positive human experiences as something holy in and of itself. Takahata also humanizes nature, illuminating its capacity to hurt as well as inflict hurt.

Rather than attempt to teach an oft-repeated lesson about humanity and its impurities, Takahata transforms The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter into The Tale of the Princess Kaguya, a visually stunning and conceptually challenging epic from a true master. Please watch this film, and please look at my favorite visual to the left.





# BCINSSUB

## Light and Love in Ingmar Bergman

By Malaika Mitra

The first time that a friend recommended Anne Carson's *Eros the Bittersweet: An Essay to me*, she said that it had shattered her idea of love. We were in second year, and I was hot off my first heartbreak with my first love. It took me another year to read it, during a time when I was falling in love again—this time with reciprocation. I understood why my friend felt the way that she did, and I also understood that, as someone in a loving relationship, I could not feel the same way.

*Eros the Bittersweet* isn't just about romantic love, it's about romantic longing. Throughout the book, Carson brings back the concept of the three-point circuit she first observes in a poem by Sappho. Carson's three points are the "lover, beloved, and that which comes between them." In the poem, Sappho expresses desire for a woman, desire which is held apart from her by the man she is laughing with. Eros—or romantic love—as a concept lies in this gap. Eros is lack. None of the points in the circuit are static, they are "electrified by desire" so as to be both connected and disjointed from each other. Eros can never truly be fulfilling, you can only reach toward it.

On a dreary day in early January, I was stuck indoors waiting out a blizzard. I decided to watch my first Ingmar Bergman movie, *Winter Light*, on a whim because the title was beautiful. The film itself is beautifully spare. Most of it takes place within a church, having moments of silence interspersed with some of the most elegant dialogue I have heard. It follows a pastor, Tomas Ericsson, who is disillusioned with God following his wife's death four years prior. He attempts to advise a suicidal man, Jonas Persson, who has become disaffected with his faith after reading about the atomic bomb. Tomas can only bring himself to say trite words, he himself not believing in his appeals to faith, and Jonas dies. Meanwhile, Tomas's ex-girlfriend Märta comforts him, scolds him, and attempts to win his love, sometimes all within the same scene.

Sappho's three-point circuit is evident in *Winter Light*, but eros expresses itself in different ways for Märta as opposed to Tomas. For Märta, on some level it could be read that "that which comes between [the lover and the beloved]," i.e. the third point, is Tomas's dead wife. However, upon closer inspection, it is clear that the third point is actually Tomas's "private God." Throughout the film, Märta expresses confusion at Tomas's faithless faith. She herself is an atheist, and doesn't understand his allegiance to his profession despite his lack of faith. Tomas only believes in God so far as he believes that God loves him most of all, something which he shared with his late wife. His wife contained his love for God, and so once she was gone, an absence has been created. At the level of eros, this absence echoes from the past into the future, separating Tomas from fulfillment in his love for God and fulfillment in his relationship with Märta.

At one point in the film, Tomas asks why Märta took communion. She responds "It's a love feast, isn't it?" This line in particular struck me, I think because I saw the difference between Tomas and Märta's views on religion and love. For Tomas, having no unselfish view of God, communion is a religious duty and not necessarily a faithful moment. By contrast, Märta's understanding of religion is through love, particularly a love of Jesus. Though she is an atheist, she views love itself as being fundamental to the practice of communion, and so participates in it without shame when she wishes to attend Tomas's service.

So where does this leave us? Are Tomas and Märta doomed to never quite fulfill their desires? If you were looking for a satisfying ending, *Winter Light* is not the film for you. At many points I was frustrated with Tomas's insistence on living a mechanical life—one where passion and love turned to despair and disassociation. I was also frustrated at Märta for having so much hope, for refusing to give up, for being so much like I was after my first heartbreak. However, I never saw this as a cautionary tale. Rather, I saw beauty in the end, in their stubborn insistence on continuing as they are. It is the embodiment of eros: reaching toward the distance which they will never close.

Although I said at the beginning of this article that I would never feel the same way as my friend, this is only because I have experienced a different kind of eros in my life. Had I read *Eros the Bittersweet* after my first heartbreak, I may have felt that love would always be eternally reaching for someone else, and that it was bad to do so. However, I'm not so sure about the latter anymore. Aldous Huxley says in *Doors of Perception*: "Sensations, feelings, insights, fancies—all these are private and, except through symbols and at second hand, incomunicable." We may never know everything about our partners, and yet maybe it is enough simply to try to close that distance. This trying is why, despite my frustrations, I can't help but feel affection—maybe even connection—for the situations that Tomas and Märta are in.

## Puberty, Virginity, and Desire in Catherine Breillat's *Fat Girl* (2001)

By Vicky Huang

Catherine Breillat is cinema's greatest provocateur. Over the last few years, her extremely sexual work has stirred a great range of reactions, from critics dubbing her as a pornographer dressed up as art cinema, to a brilliant protegee of de Sade and Bataille. I think her critics woefully miss the point; Breillat's work may be about enmeshed bodies, but it is paradoxically unerotic. Her filmography indeed focuses on sex, but not in hopes of titillating the squirming viewer or providing visual pleasure. Rather, Breillat's artist project is about exposing the mystical idea of sex through a critical feminist lens. To share tales of our 'debaucherous' desires—something women have long been shamed for since patriarchy made us into worshippers of demurality—in an exceptionally sterile way.

Nowhere is this more apparent than Breillat's striking film, *Fat Girl* (2001). A vacation story about two jealous sisters—Elena (Roxane Mesquida) and Anaïs (Anaïs Re-boux)—quickly devolves into a treatise on the trauma of girlhood. The film is premised on Breillat's acute understanding that puberty is a gendered confrontation of flesh. Boys become men with riveting muscles and a terrifying, bestial strength. Inversely, girls become weak, docile women. The girl who could once run as fast as the boys in her class begins to lag behind—soon, she competes in a different category. She starts to notice salacious gazes from men on the street, in the grocery store, perhaps even her own home. Her growing body now becomes bondaged by patriarchal oppression. For men, puberty is empowerment; for women, it is captivity.

In *Fat Girl*, Breillat carefully untangles this tension by contrasting how Elena and Anaïs relate to their new bodies. Elena enters puberty gracefully: her thin, waif-like figure combined with her coquette mannerisms enchant the many men who enter her periphery. Meanwhile, Anaïs is stuck with lumps and bumps that exacerbate her gloomy, misanthropic demeanor. If the female body is a commodity, ugly women do not fare well in the sexual economy.

For much of the film, Anaïs watches hallessly like a cuckold as her pretty sister experiences a summer of awful sex and objectification. Elena's confusing first time with a man more than double her age is framed in unflinching long takes, while the 'fat girl' watches. Anaïs' seething jealousy is perhaps odd to the priggish, feminist onlooker: why would anyone yearn for this? Such questions, I think, overlook the tragedy inherent to girlhood. Although we may intellectually reject our sexualization, even the most reflexive feminist is unable to drown out the grating noise coming from the patriarchy. Though young and naive, Anaïs perceptively understands that to be a woman is to be reduced to male pleasure: if she is not desired, then how can she graduate from being a girl?

*Fat Girl* ends in an utter terror—which, sadly, defines many people's first encounters with sex. Anaïs, Elena, and their mother are driving on the highway when a man suddenly jumps in front of their car. The vehicle swerves, instantly killing the latter two. For a film which has, until now, been shot with neo-realist techniques, the sudden jolt of violence is startling and adds to the affect of what's to come. In an excruciatingly long take, the man pulls Anaïs into the woods and rapes her, gruffing and huffing over her like a brutish animal. However, when the authorities finally arrive, we hear Anaïs' claim that no rape took place. Either the trauma has yet to register or, more compellingly, Anaïs sees this not as assault but an experience to finally propel her into adulthood. As transformation from pathetic flesh to a desirable object—for her, this is liberation.

Breillat is not excusing rape here, but prying at a very common part of the feminine experience which Paglia, the hand maiden of the patriarchy, is known for: capitulation. *Fat Girl* knows that sexual validation can be a powerful feeling, a twisted pleasure akin to masochism, especially for the eager virgin. Although Anaïs' complex subjectivity is challenging, it is an example of what I greatly appreciate about Breillat's films: her promiscuous heroines are multi-dimensional subjects dealing with the contradictions latent in heterosexual sex.



# Date Night Do's and Don'ts: Movie Edition

## Sana Banana ARTS AND CULTURE

It can be hard to pick a movie to watch on any occasion, but when you're watching with a romantic interest the wrong choice can turn out anywhere from mildly awkward to catastrophic. Here are some movies you should or shouldn't watch, depending on who's going to be sitting next to you.

### With a secret crush...

DO: watch Amélie (2001, dir. Jean-Pierre Jeunet)

This is a beautiful movie about a shy but competent lead who's not only pursuing her love interest, but also her own life. Perfect for if you need a little encouragement to make a move but don't want to be too obvious about your feelings.

DON'T: watch Titane (2021, dir. Julia Ducournau)

One thing you should not want your crush to think about while you're trying to woo them is why you wanted to watch an insane cyborg serial killer have sex with a car.

### With a first date...

DO: watch Submarine (2010, dir. Richard Ayoade)

Coming from someone who tends to dislike 15-year-old boys on film, trust me when I say this movie's protagonist is one of the sweetest romantics ever put to screen. It's cute, inoffensive and pretty universally funny. I'd recommend this to anyone.

DON'T: watch Crash (1996, dir. David Cronenberg)

I have two reasons for picking this. Reason #1: this movie is full of freaky people having freaky sex, and if you don't really know each other that's an easy recipe for discomfort. Reason #2: It's too good!!! I'd hate to see anyone in the very realistic scenario of being ignored by a date who's too busy watching people have sex in cars.

### You're tryna get it on...

DO: watch literally anything.

If there's one thing I've learned from listening to other people's sexcapades, it's that your movie choice here generally doesn't matter. Scott Pilgrim vs The World? Sure! Everything Everywhere All At Once? Done deal! Just put that Netflix shuffle on and you'll be fine.

DON'T: watch The Piano Teacher (2001, dir. Michael Haneke)

That being said, this one's a definite NO. It doesn't matter if you pay attention for the whole two hours or just a few minutes; at best, it will turn you and your partner off doing literally anything at all for the rest of the night, and at worst it will make you never want to touch yourself or another person ever again.

### You're trying to impress a filmbro (or babe)...

DO: Salò, or the 120 Days of Sodom (1975, dir. Pier Paolo Pasolini)

Yeah just trust me on this one. Enjoy!

DON'T: La Dolce Vita (1960, Federico Fellini)

This film is about a self-pitying man who hates everyone around him and thinks his hot girlfriend is too clingy. Extra "don't watch this" points if your date is an aspiring writer.

### You love each other...

DO: watch Before Sunrise (1995, dir. Richard Linklater)

The kind of "no plot, just vibes" movie which lets you watch someone be in love, whether they're on screen or right next to you.

DON'T: watch Brief Encounter (1945, dir. David Lean)

One of the most devastatingly romantic movies about two people who can't be together. Even if I were married myself, I'd still be rooting for this couple's infidelity so don't watch this if you have even a shred of doubt about your relationship.

### With / as a third wheel...

DO: watch Singin' In The Rain (1952, dir. Stanley Donen & Gene Kelly)

Not at all sexy (thank you Hays Code!) but also not un-romantic. This is a perfect, joyful movie for exactly three friends who all love each other equally (as friends).

DON'T: watch Y Tu Mamá También (2001, dir. Alfonso Cuarón)

All I can say is that the three of you may never look at each other in the same way again. Don't even watch this if you intend to become a throuple.

### You're having second thoughts about them...

DO: watch Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind (2004, dir. Michel Gondry)

Whether you're looking for something to push you to break up with them, or remind you how good you and your partner are together, this movie will offer you the space to really consider what you want to do.

DON'T: watch Possession (1981, dir. Andrzej Żuławski)

Stabbing, shooting, drowning; you name it. Possession contains probably the worst outcomes of a breakup I've ever seen in my life. Give your sanity a chance and don't watch this.

### You guys are TOXIC...

DO: watch Phantom Thread (2017, dir. Paul Thomas Anderson)

For some people, toxic just works. Daniel Day-Lewis and Vicky Krieps play characters whose relationship works not in spite of, but thanks to the mean ways they treat each other. Watch this and celebrate the acts of love which only the two of you could ever understand.

DON'T: watch Out of the Past (1947, dir. Jacques Tourneur)

Without giving anything away, all I can say is that if you're someone who likes to avoid thinking about your relationships with any sense of fatigue or resignation then this noir is not for you.

### They're kind of an asshole...

DO: It Happened One Night (1934, dir. Frank Capra)

Maybe your partner rubs you the wrong way sometimes, but maybe you actually kind of like it! If this movie resonates with you, I'd say that's a good sign that your tension is just the right kind of romantic.

DON'T: In A Lonely Place (1950, dir. Nicholas Ray)

Watch this movie without your partner, in secret, and if Humphrey Bogart makes you feel the same way your partner does? Run.

Happy watching!

## SAM'S SHOWTIME SCHEDULE

### Samantha 'Sam' Guevara ARTS & CULTURE

Cheers to the time of romance. For the cinema lovers, movie obsessors, and film adorers, let us celebrate with a showtime special in tribute to love letters to cinema. Specifically, movies about the art of making movies. Without further ado, a movie critic (Letterboxd user) and film scholar (cinema undergrad) presents:

#### Films About Filmmaking.



#### 2. THE WATERMELON WOMAN

(1996) Dir. Cheryl Dunye

*"All you do since you don't have a girlfriend is watch those boring old films."*

A debut feature that was the first film directed by an 'out' Black lesbian, *The Watermelon Woman* follows an aspiring Black lesbian filmmaker who works at a video store and is making a movie about the life of an uncredited Black actress from the early 1900s. A movie about loving and relationships, art and creating, as well as 'race relations.'

#### 1. CINEMA PARADISO

(1988) Dir. Giuseppe Tornatore

*"Life isn't like in the movies. Life is much harder."*

An accomplished and acclaimed Italian drama, *Cinema Paradiso* deals with friendship and hardship by introducing a bond between a theatre projectionist and a boy who is escaping life in war-torn Sicily by turning to the projectionist's movie house. A film about memories from childhood and nostalgic coming-of-age that showcases how both people and cinema change.



#### 4. CLOSE-UP

(1990) Dir. Abbas Kiarostami

*"Don't think a director is different from ordinary people. He's one of you."*

A docufiction film, *Close-Up* centres around the true story, and real-life trial, of a cinephile who impersonated Iranian movie director Mohsen Makhmalbaf. A movie including the people involved who act as themselves through reenactment filming which investigates identity and image, in addition to delving into audiences and creations.

#### 3. LIVING IN OBLIVION

(1995) Dir. Tom DiCillo

*"Roll that motherfuckin' camera."*

An independent satirical black comedy, *Living in Oblivion* tells the tale of a low-budget director struggling to complete a movie because of one farcical disaster after another in a hilarious pursuit of indie filmmaking. A cinematic experience about the tragicomic problems that occur on set, from working with unprofessional actors to accidentally getting the boom mic in the shot.





# 8 Love Songs for the End of the World

## Zach Zanatta PLAYLIST OF THE MONTH

Love songs are one of the most storied traditions in the history of popular music. They can range from saccharine twee, to lavish R&B, to upbeat pop. However, this February it felt fitting to do something new. This year we shut the door on Elton John and The Beatles, and we turned a blind eye to Taylor Swift and Whitney Houston. In this playlist, love isn't cute, nor is it sweet. Here, love is what lies at the bottom of Pandora's box, the last bastion of humanity against the torrents of the apocalypse. Love will be heavy, love will spill from your headphones and pool around your feet, love will inscribe itself in stone with lightning. The following are 8 love songs for the end of the world.

"The Pull" by The Microphones paints a portrait of a man abandoning the world to become one with nature. The song's first half is the resignation of reality, a mournful folk song which constructs the isolating new world. However, his ascent is interrupted by another individual whose beauty threatens to draw the narrator back to Earth. Their introduction pauses the uniformly recurring chords and the world hangs in balance. Then the worlds collide. Love brings the narrator back, and each world is destroyed by one another through the arrival of this indescribable foreign entity. The folk song ends, and thunderous drums erupt from the silence. Guitar feedback and a ghostly voice push the audio to its limit, pulling apart its own seams. In "The Pull," love is an apocalyptic rescue. It's a force so powerful it annihilates the narrator's prison of loneliness, and the song itself buckles under the pressure.

The end of the world wouldn't be complete without the post-apocalypse. "Dreams" by TV On The Radio is a love song assembled by the ashes of a ruined world. The song depicts a barren landscape, one shattered by a relationship gone sour. Tunde Ade-bimpe's low vocals lament crushed dreams over hollow instrumentation, when suddenly, the hypnotic drawl is shattered by the blaring of a choir of siren-like synths. The song transforms from a lament to a fiery plea for love, one intent to rescue its world rather than wallow in its wreckage. Grief is drowned in impassioned appeals for change and forgiveness. Despite the ravaged world of "Dreams," love not only persists, but ruptures through the muck for a post-apocalyptic digital scream to return love to where it belongs.

Japandroids' "House That Heaven Built" could be the last rock song that will ever be recorded. A blistering, deafening electric fury of drums, guitar, and vocals, performed by a duo of bleeding hearts so large they threaten to drown themselves. Many love songs surround themselves in extravagant fluff of crooning vocals and oppressive strings, but Japandroids cut the fat for a stirring song driven by love and love only. David Prowse's rapid, concussive drums support Brian King's fiery guitar through a blistering 5 minutes. The love of the song is so intense, it can only be realized through the purest means of music. Despite the size of the band, there's no space for silence, each gap is filled by explosive emotion. While loud and furious, Japandroid's Hail Mary of finality is driven by a tender love.

"Outro" from M83 is a romantic funeral march from 100 years in the future. It's a symphonic reach to the heavens for a world on the brink of oblivion. While the lyrics forewarn impending doom, they close with a promise of devotion as the singer wails "I'm your king." It's with this covenant of love that the song plunges into its climax, a massive wash of sound composed of strings, synths, drums, and guitar. The band unites for one final battle cry, and they refuse to go quietly. As the song resigns to greater forces, it launches love to the battlefield. As it fades from its crushing orchestra, a lone piano closes the song with a simple coda, an end of the world where love managed to make it.

Bruce Springsteen's catalogue is rooted in a classic vision of America. In "Thunder Road," he sets that world ablaze. American icons become ghosts of a decaying world, and Springsteen wants to escape it with the girl of his dreams. He promises to take her away from this world, to save her from the crumbling suburbia that entraps them, and she accepts. Together they flee, taking their naïve optimism on the road to the unknown. Yet their escape isn't marked by fear; the E-Street band paves "Thunder Road" with uproarious hope for the young lovers. As they choose love, the old world fades in the rearview mirror and they soar on musical wings to embrace the new.

Derek and the Dominos' cover of "Little Wing" takes Hendrix's trippy love song and implodes it, creating a cacophony of warring guitars. Little Wing seems to serve as the apex of love songs, stretching to the brink of collapse yet never diminishing. Duane Allman and Eric Clapton's vocals howl above overlapping guitars, describing a woman who has shattered their preconceptions of love. The song explodes, and the vocals give way to dueling guitars and crashing cymbals. While the pieces of the song are strewn across its psychedelic landscape, its aching sense of passion forms an unbreakable connective tissue. It takes love and expands it across the universe, bending and screaming in a cosmic catharsis of unbridled feeling whose love feels familiar despite the scope.

"I'll Believe in Anything" is a sonic and emotional experience that truly feels like the weight of the earth is crashing on your shoulders. The sheer beauty of love is what propels this anthem to soaring heights of apocalyptic yearning. The song's carnival synths and crushing drums bring love to its knees and Spencer Krug's broken yells promise an escape. It's an open hand in the midst of an explosion, wedding vows for the apocalypse, a testament to a love that could very well evade the end of the world. It's devotion as action, emotion so powerful it shakes the earth, and while it's just a song, for a moment it seems that we too can be taken where nobody knows us, and nobody gives a damn.

"Heroes" by David Bowie closes the playlist as a love song birthed from a hopeless reality. Bowie wrote "Heroes" during his stint in Berlin. It follows two lovers separated by the Berlin wall. Bowie's song is underscored with a potent fear of death, a result of genuine unstable political circumstances. The instrumentation mimics planes flying overhead, keeping the song rooted in a scarily real sense of apocalypse. However, love soars above the constrictions of threatening geopolitics. While Bowie stares apocalypse in the face, love persists. It is wounded and it is unrealistic, but it's the only thing they have left, and so it becomes everything. Like the last 7 songs, love doesn't cause the end of the world, it survives it. It's a power so strong it can resist the apocalypse, and despite the inevitable barrage of misery that comes with life, it prevails. If there's anything this playlist seeks to prove, it's that it always will.

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/7kBXBpCaoKwlOfTGljxcx?si=6f-3771b8c1od4d7e&pt=4a56788a3e3089072e5c1f878ca32e60>

### Tracklist

- "The Pull" - The Microphones
- "Dreams" - Tv On the Radio
- "The House That Heaven Built" - Japandroids
- "Outro" - M83
- "Thunder Road" - Bruce Springsteen
- "Little Wing" - Derek and the Dominos
- "I'll Believe in Anything" - Wolf Parade
- "Heroes" - David Bowie





# HOROSCOPE OF THE MONTH



## Lina Obeidat HOROSCOPES

**Aquarius:** Based on Mercury's entry into your 8th house, I can confidently say that you'll experience a great deal of changes regarding some of the aspects of your life that usually remain stagnant but in fact have a tendency to change from time to time and, as such, will change during this time, as well as other times to come.

**Pisces:** Based on Jupiter's entry into Mercury's rearview mirror, it would seem as though you were sticking your nose into places where it shouldn't be. Stop it. Don't be that person.

**Aries:** Because of the asset turnover ratio and velocity of circulation with respect to Uranus' sixteen moon-adjacent celestial figures, you'll find yourself experiencing a great surge in creative energy. Let this creative energy guide you all the way to Robarts Library, where you can find a way to make the exterior look less like a constipated turkey.

**Taurus:** You may have already noticed the radical wave of confidence that has swept over each and every aspect of your life due to certain changes in Betelgeuse's stomach lining. Do yourself a favour and bring the confidence down a little bit. Okay? Because this isn't Hell's Kitchen. Stop chopping up your cucumbers like that.

**Gemini:** The foreign exchange reserves between Saturn's rings and Neptune's fifth moon \$helly suggest that you have yet to heal from your most recent heartbreak. Some might say that you must forgive and forget in order to move on, but ... maybe you don't? Like, whoever actually thought that would be beneficial in any way? Embrace the angst, and go listen to some Adele.

**Cancer:** Given the paradox of thrift in relation to galactic bodies burning at a temperature greater than 215 degrees celsius as well as the imminent threat of a credit default swap between the Sun and its step-father in law, I would urge you to hold back on making any risky investments this month, like funnelling half of your life's savings into your roommate's new startup which promises to deliver the world a revolutionary new product called "diet water."

**Leo:** Given the entry of Venus and Mars into your 5th and 23rd houses, respectively, it's clear that you'll enter into a deep state of nostalgia that'll continue in perpetuity or at least until the month is over. This will largely manifest itself in a newfound appetite for Vine compilations from 2010 — a simpler time. We're talking: "Road work ahead? Yeah, I sure hope it does," and "Look at this graph," and "AMERICA EXPLAIN" and "I'm in me mum's car." If this appetite becomes insatiable to a degree of concern, you can always get help at 1-800-FR-E-SH-A-VOCA-DO.

**Virgo:** Due to a four degree shift in the position of Cassiopeia, your compatibility with protein powder will rise by 60 percent. Take advantage of this and bulk up. Become the world's next heavyweight wrestling champion. Or don't. Maybe just allow yourself to be able to open up a jar of pickles without help from anyone. Whatever floats your boat.

**Libra:** Get over your road rage.

**Scorpio:** The unequal distribution of shareholder value amongst certain galactic bodies in the east-western hemisphere of the Milky Way means that your patience will run thinner than usual for the next month. Make a quick trip to Shopper's and stock up on those apology cards that say "sorry for being such a drag" with images of random old ladies smoking cigarettes underneath.

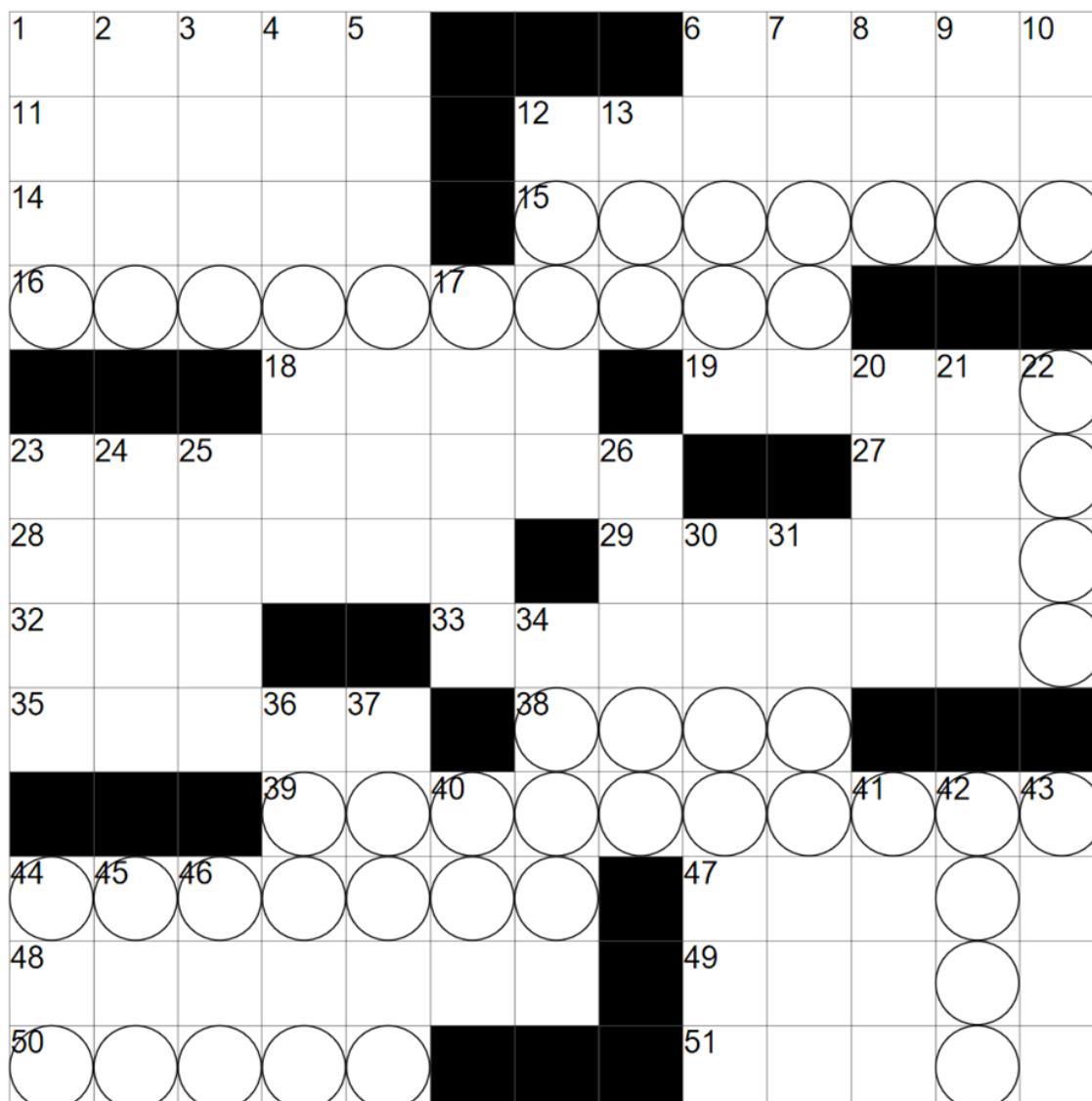
**Sagittarius:** The twitch in Neptune's right eye suggests that you're starved for attention. I recommend you take a few days off from schoolwork and lectures before midterm season hits to do some soul-searching.

**Capricorn:** According to a 14 degree shift in the position of Polaris, you'll generate a great deal of attention from your peers this month. Maybe you'll single handedly get rid of grade deflation, or change U of T's ridiculous POSt system, or find a legal loophole in the non-refundable meal plans purchased by those of us living in residence. Or maybe you'll walk out of the bathroom with toilet paper stuck to your shoe. Regardless, all eyes will be on you.



# Crossword: Valentine's Day

Rick Lu  
CROSSWORD



## Clues:

### DOWN

1. Anti-authority letters
2. Dwarf from "The Hobbit" or hobbit from "The Rings of Power"
3. Richard Nixon's wolf-like catchphrase in "Futurama"
4. The art of accuracy
5. "Like a Virgin" and "Like a Prayer" singer
6. Glacial column
7. Like cold ones and testosterone
8. Napoleon's friend
9. Bolted
10. "Star Trek" series (abbr.)
12. \_\_\_ you (words of longing)
13. Collaborative Google file
17. Canadian birds
20. Singer Wooley who created "The Purple People Eater" and the Wilhelm scream
21. Giveaway, in poker
22. In no danger
23. Type of account that appears on your ACORN invoice
24. Aid in sin
25. Vehicle for hire
26. Princess topper
30. Russian empress
31. Some salty solutions

34. Low-commitment flings
36. Garden tool
37. One who annoys
40. Around 1.47 CAD
41. Spanish appetizer
42. Concerning butts
43. "\_\_\_, \_\_\_, Crocodile", 2022 musical film
44. English channel
45. Logan, Connor, Kendall, Roman, or Shiv
46. YouTube channel which pits iconic figures against each other, musically

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### ACROSS

1. Cost \_\_\_ and a leg
6. Intelligent
11. Asian peninsula, as spelt by most Romance languages
12. To whom you turn for innovation
14. Take \_\_\_ trip (drive around)
15. What starts your day
16. Concerning life
18. Alkali suffixes
19. Fluid sacs
23. Total mess
27. "Isn't \_\_\_ bit like you and me?" (Beatles lyric)
28. The \_\_\_, former first family of the United States
29. The "se" in "per se"
32. 15A, 16A, 38A, 39A, 44A, 50A, 22D, and 42D are all types of what?
33. Like pencil but not pen
35. "Who is there?" reply
38. Concerning mouths
39. Before the altar
44. Couple's end
47. \_\_\_ case
48. What some doctors lack?
49. Triangular flag country
50. Concerning computers
51. Make \_\_\_ (do business)



**P.S. If you love Publication Politics and Pizza Parties (Double PPs for short) come to the Innis Herald AGM on March 19th, 6pm, Res Events Room**

## Answers

